Curriculum Handbook *for* **Parents**

2003–2004

Catholic School Version

GRADE 7 SEVEN

Alberta LEARNING

Alberta Learning

This document, along with most Alberta Learning documents, can be found on the Web site at **http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca**.

Parent documents referenced in this handbook, along with most Alberta Learning documents, are available for purchase from:

Learning Resources Centre
12360 – 142 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5L 4X9
Telephone: 780–427–5775
Fax: 780–422–9750
Internet: http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

Telephone numbers of branches referred to in this handbook can be reached, toll free inside Alberta, by dialing 310–0000.

Aboriginal Services Branch
Telephone: 780–415–9300
Fax: 780–415–9306
E-mail: asb@gov.ab.ca

Curriculum Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–3745
E-mail: curric.contact@learning.gov.ab.ca

French Language Services Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2940
Fax: 780–422–1947
E-mail: LSB@learning.gov.ab.ca

Learner Assessment Branch
Telephone: 780–427–0010
Fax: 780–422–4200
E-mail: assess.contact@learning.gov.ab.ca

Learning and Teaching Resources Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–0576
E-mail: curric.contact@learning.gov.ab.ca

Learning Technologies Branch
Telephone: 780–674–5350
Fax: 780–674–6561
E-mail: ltbgeneral@gov.ab.ca

Special Programs Branch
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ISSN 1483–1724

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103-07425/

Curriculum Handbook *for* Parents

2003–2004

Catholic School Version

GRADE 7

This Curriculum Handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 7 curriculum. It includes:

- selected learning outcomes for each subject area from the provincial curriculum
- links to the Alberta Learning Web site where more information can be found
- information on personal and career development and planning for senior high school
- a feedback form.

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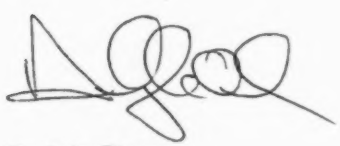
Message from the
Minister of Learning

Excellence in education is of primary importance to Albertans. Parents, students, teachers and community members have demonstrated their passion for maintaining our outstanding education system for the benefit of today's students and future generations.

The Government of Alberta is committed to continuing to provide Alberta's students with a first-class education. One of the many ways of ensuring Alberta's students succeed in our global community is through our high quality curriculum. Alberta's curriculum is innovative and responsive to the learning needs of students. It ensures that students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

As a parent, you play a vital role in the education of your child. When you know what your child is learning in school, you are able to reinforce that learning at home. In order to help support parents in this process, Alberta Learning has published the *Curriculum Handbook for Parents* series. As partners in education, this resource provides you with valuable information about the learning goals that have been set for students. I encourage you to discuss the contents of the *Curriculum Handbook for Parents* with your child's teacher, who can provide further information and guidance.

It is vital that all partners in education—including parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, trustees and other members of our community—work collaboratively to ensure we continually meet the needs of students in our ever-changing world. Together, we can continue to ensure that every student has a solid foundation from which to learn, grow and succeed.



Dr. Lyle Oberg
Minister of Learning

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Dear Parents and Guardians:

On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Alberta, I welcome this opportunity to affirm you in your role as parents in the education of your children and wish to express my appreciation to the Government of Alberta and Alberta Learning for this 'Curriculum Handbook for Parents'.

The Church has always recognized with confidence that you, parents, are the first and primary educators of your children, especially with regards to education in the faith. This is a noble, yet, challenging calling that is rightfully yours. Today, therefore, because of the many diverse pressures and influences on our children, your role is vital in working with our schools to continue to provide the best possible education for our children. To those of you who have entrusted your children to a Catholic school be assured that it is with great respect for these facts that we support you in your role. I encourage you to work closely with our Catholic schools by joining your local school councils or parent groups. Be a strong voice for the Catholic identity of schools. In this regard, you will share in a concrete and invaluable way in the central mission of the Church which is to proclaim Jesus and his Gospel in the world today and, in so doing, hand on our faith to our children.

I commend Alberta Learning for providing parents with this practical Curriculum Handbook. It is a clear presentation of what parents can expect of our Alberta schools, Public and Catholic, and by its very existence also acknowledges how important you are as parents in your children's education. In it, you will find a comprehensive presentation of the content and expectations of the Religious Education Program approved by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. It reflects the essential character of Catholic schools as communities of learning.

+ Thomas Collins

Thomas Collins
Archbishop of Edmonton
President, Alberta Conference of Catholic Bishops

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Information for Parents

Web site links for further information are provided throughout the handbook.

Students learn in a variety of environments—in their homes, schools and communities. Parents, teachers and community members form a partnership to assist this learning.

When parents know what children are studying at school, they can provide better home support for their children's learning. The *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents* have been designed to assist parents in participating in their child's education by fostering an understanding of what students learn at each grade level.

Schooling in Alberta

Schools provide students with a broad educational program that helps them:

- develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in a variety of subject areas
- demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in problem solving and decision making
- demonstrate competence in using information technologies
- know how to learn and work independently and as part of a team
- develop desirable personal characteristics and the ability to make ethical decisions
- demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility and persistence
- have the desire and realize the need for lifelong learning.

Schools also prepare students to make positive contributions to society through communities, the workplace and/or post-secondary studies.

Within the context of Catholic schools, the curriculum in all of its aspects—content, the teaching process, and the total school environment—reflect the values of faith, hope, charity, forgiveness and justice as found in the gospels and the message of Jesus Christ as understood by the Catholic Church.

Teachers make a number of decisions when planning for classroom instruction. Within any group of students, there is a range of individual differences. Teachers use the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum to meet the needs and interests of their students and to make connections across subject areas. They choose resources, equipment and materials to help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teaching methods and schedules vary from school to school and from class to class to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

In Catholic schools, there are many opportunities for integrating gospel values and nurturing the presence of God in our midst within the curriculum. Teachers will determine where religious education and Church teaching can be integrated with other subjects.

Alberta Learning assists teachers by reviewing and selecting the best possible resources, such as textbooks, videotapes and computer software, for all subject areas. Authorization of resources by Alberta Learning indicates that the resources meet high standards and can help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teachers can choose other resources, as long as they follow school board policy.

http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

Authorized resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

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Helping Your Child at Home

Here are some important pointers for you to help your child learn.

- Be positive and encouraging in your approach to learning. It will help your child feel confident and enthusiastic about success.
- Talk to your child about schoolwork, and help with homework when you can.
- Help your child set realistic goals, and discuss progress in an encouraging way.
- Connect your child's schoolwork with everyday life, and use these opportunities for problem solving in everyday situations.
- Keep in touch with teachers about your child's progress, including successes and achievements, not just concerns.

The following resources may help you. Check your child's school for availability.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/parents/mathprbk.pdf

- *The Parent Advantage*—Tips and strategies for helping with homework in grades 1 through 9.

http://www.learnalberta.ca

- *Working Together in Mathematics Education*—Ways parents can support student learning in mathematics.

http://www.2learn.ca/

- *LearnAlberta.ca* Web site—Online multimedia learning resources that directly relate to the Alberta programs of study.
- *TELUS 2Learn* Web site—An education–business partnership that provides Internet inservice, support and information for Alberta teachers, students and parents.

School Councils

Schools, parents and communities all play an important role in education. School councils are designed to give parents, students, teachers and other community members meaningful involvement in decisions about policies, programs and services and the allocation of funds to support them within their schools. Each school council determines its own level of involvement, depending on local needs. Parents can get more information on how to get involved by contacting their local school or the Alberta Home and School Councils Association (AHSCA).

http://www.ahsca.ab.ca

School Fees and Fundraising

Decisions regarding school fees and fundraising are made by the local board or by the school principal in consultation with the school council within policy guidelines established by the school board. In September 2000, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) developed and provided guidelines to school boards to assist boards in establishing appropriate local policy.

http://www.asba.ab.ca/advisories/policy-fundraising.pdf

School Fees

http://www.asba.ab.ca/advisories/policy-fees.pdf

A primary objective is to ensure that fees are not being charged for core items. Fees may be charged for supplies and materials provided for the student's personal use or consumption; this may include such things as calculators, locker rentals, student planners and computer diskettes. The fees charged are on a cost recovery basis.

Local policies may include a provision to waive fees or extend payment allowances where parents are experiencing financial difficulties.

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Fundraising

The guidelines state fundraising should not be done for core items such as textbooks. Some fundraising is appropriate for things like athletics uniforms, field trips, and other extras that staff and parents want for their schools. Participation in fundraising activities should be voluntary. No student should be excluded from an event or program because the parents did not contribute.

Alternative Programs

Choice is one of the important principles Alberta's education system is built on. When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students can choose from a wide range of options. They can select from public schools, Catholic schools, Francophone schools, private schools, and charter schools. They can also access a number of unique and innovative programs—including virtual schools. Parents can also opt to home school their children.

Information about Curriculum

Alberta has one of the best education systems in the world. One of the many reasons is a centralized, high quality curriculum that outlines what students are expected to learn and be able to do, in all subjects and grades. Alberta's curriculum is designed to help students achieve their individual potential and create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Accessing Information

Parents can access information about the curriculum and learning resources in a number of ways:

- Contact teachers or school administrators.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/parent.asp

- **Curriculum Handbooks** contain selected outcomes for each subject area from the Alberta programs of study. They provide a more detailed picture of each year. This Curriculum Handbook is one of a set from Kindergarten to senior high school produced in general and Catholic versions, and in French. They are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/parent.asp

- **Curriculum Summaries** for each grade level provide a brief overview of each year. The summaries are available on the Alberta Learning Web site.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/

- In Alberta, the provincial curriculum is organized into **Programs of Study**. They contain learning outcomes for each subject area from Kindergarten to Grade 12. They are legal documents that outline why the educational program is offered, what students are expected to learn and the basic principles about how students are to achieve the required knowledge, skills and attitudes. School jurisdictions use the *Programs of Study* to ensure that students meet provincial standards of achievement. However, they have flexibility to decide how to teach the curriculum and the order in which it is taught. They are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/lrdb

- The Authorized Resources Database on the Alberta Learning Web site lists **Alberta authorized student and teacher resources**, most of which are available for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca

- The **Alberta Learning Web site** contains information on learning from the early years to adulthood.

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Curriculum Content—Deciding What Students Should Learn

The Alberta curriculum strives to:

- reflect the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that Alberta students need to be well prepared for future learning and the world of work
- anticipate and plan for the needs of the future by considering the changes and developments in society such as trends in employment, globalization and advances in technology
- incorporate values of good citizenship and respect for different languages and cultures
- consider students' needs and abilities—intellectual, social, emotional and physical—at different ages and stages of growth
- ensure that each grade provides a foundation of knowledge for successful learning in subsequent years
- incorporate new discoveries and theories that are generally accepted by experts in subject areas
- develop skills that are necessary for success in learning a subject
- consider new research on proven teaching methods and how students learn best
- reflect the most appropriate level at which the skills are to be acquired
- integrate how the study of a subject contributes to student personal growth and development
- accommodate learning in different environments
- consider various ways of delivering a program to students, including new technologies and use of community resources such as distance learning and workplace learning.

Curriculum Development—Who Is Involved in the Process?

Alberta Learning takes a lead role in developing and revising provincial curriculum. However, many others, including teachers, principals, parents, education experts, post-secondary institutions and community members, play a vital role in the process. Input from various stakeholders ensures that curriculum continually meets the needs of students and that there are smooth transitions from grade to grade and to post-secondary education and the world of work.

Ensuring Curriculum Is Current

Curriculum must provide students with the knowledge and skills needed for the present and future. It is reviewed regularly and changes are made to keep it current and relevant. Curriculum revisions occur only after extensive consultations with education stakeholders.

Alberta Learning plans any curriculum changes well in advance to minimize any impact on schools, teachers and students. This ensures that school jurisdictions have sufficient time to prepare for the changes and purchase any needed resources.

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Revising Curriculum

If it is determined through the regular review process that there is a need to make minor or major revisions to a subject area in the curriculum, education stakeholders play a major role in the process. Alberta Learning conducts initial consultations and prepares a draft *Program of Studies* for that subject area. The draft is shared with a wide variety of education stakeholders through advisory committees, online feedback forms, conferences and presentations to teacher specialist councils. Teachers play a vital role in the process. They use their practical knowledge about a subject and about students' needs at specific age levels to provide input and feedback during the process.

Implementing Curriculum

The draft *Program of Studies*, developed in consultation with education stakeholders, is referred to the Minister of Learning for approval. Once approved, school jurisdictions take primary responsibility for curriculum implementation. Schools may have the opportunity to pilot the program for one year prior to full provincial implementation. This transition year gives schools time to prepare for the new curriculum. When a curriculum is implemented province-wide, all schools must teach the new curriculum.

Alberta Learning supports school jurisdictions by producing teacher resources that provide ideas for lesson planning, instructional strategies and student assessment. Also, it provides orientation for school jurisdiction leaders and lead teachers about curriculum changes and shares updates at professional conferences and in-services.

Professional development funds are provided to six Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia. Each Regional Consortia organizes and provides activities to respond to in-service needs identified locally. This may include information and orientation sessions related to curriculum revisions.

Alberta Learning also provides funding to help schools purchase learning and teaching resources through the Learning Resources Centre. These resources are designed specifically to support the provincial curriculum.

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Aboriginal Education

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/aborigin/default.asp

Aboriginal peoples throughout the province have indicated that they want their children to complete regular school requirements and achieve the same standards as set for all students in Alberta.

The term "Aboriginal" refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit. To support the learning of Aboriginal students, schools are encouraged to use learning resources that give attention to Aboriginal heritage perspectives. In addition, all students in Alberta should understand and be aware of Aboriginal cultures, lifestyles and heritage. Student and teacher resources have been developed by Alberta Learning to assist teachers.

Both provincially and locally authorized Blackfoot and Cree language and culture courses are offered in the province.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/teacherresourcescat.pdf

As well, *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* provides information to assist Aboriginal parents in working with schools to meet the special needs of their children. This resource is available for purchase from the LRC.

Our Treasured Children is a videotape that complements *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*. It highlights intergenerational stories from members of the Aboriginal community. The videotape is available for purchase from the LRC.

Supports for Learning

In every classroom and every school, students have individual needs. Teachers ensure that all students are involved in activities that help them build on their own level of learning.

Alberta students learn in a variety of ways—in schools, in the community, in small and large groups, and independently. Schools, supported by Alberta Learning, provide a variety of programs and services.

English as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/ESL/default.asp

Many children born in Canada have a first language other than English, and many students move here from non-English speaking countries. Schools provide additional assistance for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Grade 1 to Grade 12. This helps them acquire sufficient fluency in English so they can integrate into the regular classroom as quickly as possible.

Special Needs

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/

The *School Act* specifies that school boards are responsible for determining if a child is in need of a special education program. Children with special needs, including those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities, and those who are gifted and talented, require specialized learning opportunities in order to receive an education that is consistent with their identified learning needs. School boards must provide programming for all school-age children, including children with special needs, who live in their district.

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Children with special needs may require changes to: instruction, assessment strategies, materials and resources, classroom environment, equipment and/or the regular curriculum. In addition, some students may require referral to specialized health-care services.

For more information on a Review by the Minister, contact the Disputes Management Team Leader at 780–427–7235 or see Policy 3.5.1–Review by the Minister http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/pol-plan/polregs/351.asp.

Most children with special needs are placed in regular classrooms in their neighbourhood or local schools, and are provided with programming, supports and services to meet their individual needs throughout the school day. There are a range of placement options possible; different children need different kinds of support. Deciding on the educational placement for an individual child is a collaborative process, and in most instances, parents and school staff agree on appropriate placements. If there is a disagreement, parents can appeal a decision at the district level. The school principal can provide information on the appeal procedure in your district. If parents do not agree with the decision of an appeal to the school board, they may write to the Minister of Learning and ask for a review of the board decision.

All students with identified special needs require an individualized program plan (IPP). An IPP is a plan of action with measurable goals. It shows what your child knows and what he or she can do. The IPP also explains what your child will be learning and how he or she will be learning. The IPP is a flexible tool that is updated regularly. Parents, school staff and the student need to work together as a learning team to ensure that the IPP is implemented.

School staff will likely identify if your child is having learning difficulties and will have discussed with you what might be causing these difficulties. If you feel your child is having difficulty learning, you should talk to the classroom teacher to share knowledge about your child that could assist in determining the cause of these difficulties and in deciding if there are any small changes that can be made that would improve the situation. School-based staff can use a number of informal ways to identify learning needs. If it is apparent that school-based strategies are not enough, the teacher, in consultation with parents, will make a referral for a specialized assessment. Your child's teacher or the school principal will have information on the assessment procedures for your area.

The following resources provide additional information.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/ParentResources.asp

- *The Learning Team: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2003)—Information for parents of children with special needs

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/SpecialEd_stds2003.pdf

- *Standards for Special Education* (2002)—Information on the requirements for school boards regarding delivery of education programs and services to students with special needs in grades 1–12

These resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca/.

- *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2000)—Information for Aboriginal parents about rights and responsibilities regarding the education of their children with special needs

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- *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9* (1998)—Strategies for teaching organizational, reading, writing, spelling, mathematical, test taking and project skills at the grades 1–9 levels
- *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (2001)—Information on knowing yourself, getting organized, making every class count, test taking, presenting learning, getting along with others and staying motivated

Distance and Online Learning

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/

The Learning Technologies Branch (LTB) develops course materials and learning objects for distance and online learning.

http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

For information about purchasing distance learning print and CD materials, contact the Learning Resources Centre.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/400/courses.html

For a listing of all print distance learning courses available for purchase or study, visit the LTB Print Resources Web page.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/400/eproduct.html

To see the electronic products available, visit the Electronic Resources Web page.

http://www.learnalberta.ca

LearnAlberta.ca provides exciting new online educational content to students, parents and teachers. Check out multimedia material for courses, such as Grade 6 Mathematics. Access the Online Reference Centre for a wide variety of research tools, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and other reference works for all grade levels.

For information about registering in a distance learning course, contact a distance learning school, an online school, or your local school jurisdiction.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/M_12/default.asp

The French Language Services Branch develops distance learning courses for French language instruction. For courses available in French, contact the French Language Services Branch.

Integrated Occupational Program (IOP)

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/iop/default.asp

The Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) is a program of choice that begins in Grade 8 and continues through Grade 12. Students may enter the program at any time during grades 8 through 12. Students who successfully complete the IOP earn a Certificate of Achievement.

The Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) is a distinctive program for students who learn best through hands-on experiential learning activities, and when the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes is relevant to their personal experiences. Student learning is further enhanced when meaningful connections to the community are made that result in successful transitions from the school to the workplace and responsible citizenship. Community partnerships are integral to all IOP courses and include on- or off-site community/workplace involvement.

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IOP consists of academic and occupational components. Students will also take physical education, health and life skills/CALM and complementary courses.

Academic subjects:

- IOP English Language Arts 8, 9, 16, 26, 36
- IOP Mathematics 8, 9, 16, 26
- IOP Science 8, 9, 16, 26
- IOP Social Studies 8, 9, 16, 26

Occupational Component

- Practical Arts 8, 9
- Occupations 16, 26, 36

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/iop/IOPmanual.pdf

For more information, refer to the *Integrated Occupational Program Information Manual for Administrators, Counsellors and Teachers*, 1994. The manual is available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

Assessment

Assessing Student Achievement

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/default.asp

In the classroom, a teacher uses a variety of means to assess students' learning throughout the school year. These assessments are based on the instruction being provided, in order to inform the teacher's planning from day to day. Classroom assessment may serve a diagnostic purpose, indicating students' strengths and weaknesses in specific skill areas. At other times it may be formative, indicating how well students have achieved in a unit of study or how well they have achieved to a particular point in the course. At the end of a school year, a teacher also assesses how well the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes in the curriculum for that grade. This summative type of assessment is designed primarily for reporting purposes. All these classroom assessments are integral to instruction, and they are complemented by the provincial achievement tests.

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Overview of Grade 7

In Grade 7, students study required subject areas. They also choose optional courses that give them the chance to explore areas of interest and career possibilities. Students have access to 950 hours of instruction during a school year.

In Catholic schools, students participate in a Religious Education Program that is authorized by the Bishop of the local diocese.

The Grade 7 Alberta program of studies for each subject area sets out general outcomes or topics that provide an overview of the important learnings students accomplish. Specific outcomes are included for each general outcome or topic and state in detail the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are working towards achieving.

This handbook contains:

- the general outcomes or topics for each subject area
- selected specific outcomes for most subject areas.

The programs of study, which include all the general and specific outcomes, are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or from the LRC.

Required Subject Areas. ***Students take:***					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Optional Courses. ***Students may select from:***					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English*	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

* Students in French immersion programs and bilingual programs in other languages take English language arts as well as language arts in the target language. Students in immersion and bilingual programs also take a number of subjects in the target language.

New programs for the 2003–2004 school year:

- Career and Technology Studies (CTS)
  - Fabrication Studies and Financial Management
- German Language and Culture
- Science 9
- Spanish Language and Culture
- Ukrainian Language Arts

Programs under development:

- Cree Language and Culture
- Career and Technology Studies (CTS)
  - Electro-Technologies
- German Language Arts
- French as a Second Language (FSL)
- Integrated Occupational Program (IOP)
- Italian Language and Culture
- Japanese Language and Culture
- Mandarin Language and Culture
- Ukrainian Language and Culture

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Religious Education

Religious education is an essential and integral part of the life and culture of a Catholic school. Through it, students are invited to develop the knowledge, beliefs, skills, values and attitudes needed to build a relationship with God and community through the person of Jesus Christ. Religious education shares the same goals and objectives set forth for all good education, that is, the growth and development of the whole person in all his or her dimensions—physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual.

Religious education has four essential characteristics.

It is **Trinitarian**. It recognizes God as the creator of all things who gives us Jesus. It is Jesus who reveals God to us, and in turn reveals God's Spirit, through whom we understand our faith.

It is based on **Sacred Scripture** through which we hear the mystery of God revealed, the call to be in relationship with God and each other, and we learn how to pray.

It is based on the **life experience** of the students through which they are invited to discern signs of God in their daily lives.

It is presented within the tradition of the **Catholic faith community** which, based on Church teachings, sacramental and liturgical life, provides students with experiences of faith, prayer, love and justice.

With an awareness of the uniqueness of each student and a recognition that religious development takes place through a process of stages and within a community, it is expected that program presentation will vary from place to place to meet the diverse learning and religious formation needs of all students.

The Religious Education Program for elementary and junior high schools is authorized by the Bishop of the local diocese. Some school districts have developed supplementary resources and adapted the program to better meet local needs.

The themes of the Grade 7 program follow the scriptural themes of Creation, Revelation, Covenant and Redemption in Christ. The students are invited to reflect on the first two articles of the Apostles' Creed as the summation of the faith that has been handed on to us through the Church. They study the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures (Old and New Testaments) as the call to become co-creators with God in the responsible stewardship of creation. They learn of God's call to a Christian lifestyle of creedal faith in a praying and sacramental community. Furthermore, from the study of women and men of faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they are invited to become faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ. Opportunities are provided to highlight the Catholic liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent in the context of their scriptural roots.

Students explore these themes through the study of 10 units:

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Unit 1 **I . . . We.**

Students are invited to formulate, explore and express their identity in relationship to the larger faith community. They study the basic structure of the Bible and how to locate passages. They are invited to reflect on the Bible as the story of the Christian community and its relationship with God. They reflect on Scripture in history and study the key events in the history of Israel.

Unit 2 **We believe in God.**

Students explore and express the meaning of believing, and what it means to believe in God. They reflect on Abraham as an example of a person whose whole life was shaped by trust and belief in God. They hear of God's faithfulness to people as it is revealed in the story of the Exodus.

Unit 3 **We believe in God the Father Almighty.**

Students investigate the personality of God as parent. They are invited to appreciate that God's love goes far beyond human limitations and yet learn how fatherhood and motherhood help us understand God. They are invited to see the Ten Commandments as a call to live life rooted in respect for self, for others and for God. They learn about formation of conscience and of a three step decision-making model—observe, judge, act.

Unit 4 **We believe in God . . . the Creator of heaven and earth.**

Students consider the wonder of creation and the ways in which God invites us to participate in creation and in God's creative action. They reflect on God as creator, read the biblical version of creation, and are invited to understand the relationship between biblical stories, science and history. They are invited to consider that to know and accept other people, they must accept their sexuality, their maleness or their femaleness, their physical gifts and limitations.

Unit 5 **We believe in Jesus Christ his only Son.**

Students explore what makes Jesus believable, and the ways the faith community identifies Jesus. Students consider the significance of the many titles for Jesus—Rabbi, Priest, Lamb of God, Prophet, Messiah, Son of David, the Nazarene, Saviour, Son of Man, Lord, Son of God. They are invited to reflect that through his actions, Jesus reveals God's care for us. People who encounter Jesus change. As a New Testament people we are likewise challenged to change.

Unit 6 **We believe in Jesus . . . Our Lord.**

Students explore the nature of the kingdom of God and what it means to be part of that kingdom, and so address Jesus as Lord. In reflecting on the parables and on the 'Our Father' they are invited to understand that the kingdom is Jesus' call to a way of life based on loving relationships.

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Unit 7

We believe in Jesus . . . who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

Students explore the ways in which God is with us in Jesus, in which God works with us, and in which we can work with God. They reflect on Mary as an example of one who hears the word of God and responds to it with her whole heart. They are invited to see Jesus as fully human and fully divine, and as the model of holiness. They study the geography and history of Jesus' homeland, Israel.

Unit 8

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead.

Students are invited to name the ways in which they give of themselves and make connections to the suffering and death of Jesus. They are invited to reflect on the meaning of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and on how they can participate in Christ's sacrifice at the Eucharist. They are invited to consider Jesus' descent among the dead as signifying that the message of salvation is for all people in all times and all places.

Unit 9

On the third day he rose. He ascended into heaven.

Students are invited to name the hope which the resurrection of Jesus offers even during the most difficult moments of their lives. They are invited to reflect on experiences of resurrection. They consider the resurrection as the offer of new life in the face of death. They are invited to understand that Jesus can be heard in the Scriptures and seen in the blessing and breaking of bread.

Unit 10

He is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Students are invited to name the ways in which Jesus judges, and to understand that judgement is a call to be whole. Students reflect on conversion, heaven, hell, purgatory, repentence and true goodness.

As a result of participation in this program, students will:

- demonstrate a familiarity with and an ability to retell key biblical narratives that illustrate God's faithful relationship with a chosen people and the community's response to this relationship
- express connections between the relationships described in biblical events and their own life experiences
- show reverence for Scripture as God's living Word
- define human dignity and express its significance in Christian faith and practice
- name the articles of the Apostles' Creed as a summary expression of the Christian community's relationship with God and articulate some of the meaning of each article
- communicate their faith in ways that show a genuine understanding of the Apostles' Creed
- describe how the Creed is a summary of the faith community's understanding of who God is

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- explain how the Creed calls them to make responsible choices and decisions in their everyday lives
- analyze (critique) events and personal decisions in light of a commitment to follow Jesus
- describe the relationship between real-life situations and the baptismal commitment to follow Jesus in the community of the Holy Spirit
- outline the ways that prayer deepens a relationship with God
- pray, using a variety of prayer styles
- participate in traditional forms of Catholic prayer.

The school, through the Religious Education Program, complements parents in their role as primary and principal educators of their children. Home and family play a vitally important role in the faith development of children. Within the family, seeds of faith are planted. Family relationships and daily experiences are major factors in shaping a child's values, attitudes and Catholic identity. Regular religious practice and the application of classroom learning to daily life are critical parts of religious formation.

Prayer is an integral part of the Religious Education Program and of each school day since intimacy with God is the ultimate goal of Catechesis. Respecting the individual differences of children and our changing human needs, prayer is experienced in many different ways: silent reflection, guided imagery, scriptural prayer, song and formal community prayer. As we enter into prayer, we give praise and thanks for God's loving presence and call upon the Spirit to guide, nourish and empower our lives through Jesus Christ.

Teaching the sacraments occurs within the Religious Education Program. Sacraments celebrate the presence of Christ in our lives. They are effective signs that make God's grace present to us in love, healing and the transformation of our lives. Eucharist and Reconciliation are an essential part of each child's religious formation and a necessary grounding for a mature faith. As with many basic themes, Eucharist and Reconciliation are introduced in Grade 1, but continue to be deepened and intensified in each year thereafter. Children who have not yet celebrated First Communion or First Reconciliation are always welcome to contact their parish to begin their immediate preparation for the sacraments.

The Religious Education Program interprets for the students what the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches about our faith in a manner appropriate to the age and development of the students. Not everything in the Catechism is incorporated because, as the Catechism itself points out, what is taught must be adapted to the "differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, and social and ecclesial conditions among all those to whom it is addressed" (#24). Specific excerpts are quoted at the end of each theme for the teacher to help root the contents and activities of the theme in Church tradition.

The Religious Education Program is structured around the church liturgical year. This enables students to live and express faith in an integrated way at school, at home and in the parish community.

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Required Subject Areas

The required subject areas are the foundation of the junior high school program.

Required Subject Areas. ***Students take:***					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

English Language Arts

View the English language arts subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/english/

The aim of the English language arts program is to enable students to understand and appreciate language, and to use it confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and learning.

From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students are developing knowledge, skills and attitudes in six language arts: Listening and Speaking; Reading and Writing; Viewing and Representing. Students learn to compose, comprehend and respond to oral, print and other media texts. They experience a variety of texts from many cultural traditions.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how the knowledge, skills and values studied within the language arts curriculum are integrated with other subject areas, including religious education, and reflect the Catholic identity of the school.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 7 English Language Arts Program of Studies.

Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences

- extend understanding of ideas and information by finding and exploring oral, print and other media texts on related topics and themes
- use appropriate terminology to discuss developing abilities in personal language learning and use
- listen and respond constructively to alternative ideas or opinions
- use talk, writing and representing to examine, clarify and assess understanding of ideas, information and experiences

Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts

- use expectations and preferences developed during previous reading experiences to select and read new texts with purpose
- identify, connect, and summarize in own words, the main ideas from two or more sources on the same topic
- apply, flexibly, knowledge of phonics, sight vocabulary, structural analysis, language and context clues, depending on the purpose and rate of reading
- analyze how plot develops; the connection between plot and subplot; and the interrelationship of plot, setting and characters
- discuss connections among plot and subplot, main and supporting characters, main idea and theme in a variety of oral, print and other media texts
- create oral, print and other media texts that are unified by point of view, carefully developed plot and endings consistent with previous events

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Manage ideas and information

- use note-taking, outlining or representing to summarize important ideas and information in oral, print and other media texts
- discuss the types and sources of information appropriate for topic, audience, form, purpose and point of view
- distinguish between fact and opinion, and follow the development of argument and opinion
- make notes, using headings and subheadings or graphic organizers appropriate to a topic; reference sources
- communicate ideas and information in a variety of oral, print and other media texts, such as reports, autobiographies, brochures and video presentations
- identify strengths and areas for improvement in personal research skills

Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication

- revise introductions, conclusions and the order of ideas and information to add coherence and clarify meaning
- choose and use printing, cursive writing or word processing, depending on the task, audience and purpose
- identify how the format of documents enhances the presentation of content
- use correct subject–verb agreement in sentences with compound subjects
- use reference materials to confirm spellings and to solve spelling problems when editing and proofreading
- present ideas and opinions confidently, but without dominating the discussion, during small group activities and short, whole class sessions
- clarify and support ideas or opinions with details, visuals or media techniques
- listen and view attentively to organize and classify information and to carry out multistep instructions

Respect, support and collaborate with others

- identify and discuss recurring themes in oral, print and other media texts from diverse cultures and communities
- demonstrate respect for diverse ideas, cultures and traditions portrayed in oral, print and other media texts
- take responsibility for assuming a variety of roles in a group, depending on changing contexts and needs
- contribute ideas, knowledge and questions to establish an information base for research or investigations
- evaluate group process and personal contributions according to pre-established criteria to determine strengths and areas for improvement

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Mathematics

View the mathematics subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/math/

The aim of the mathematics program is to prepare students to:

- use mathematics confidently to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

Students learn to use the following mathematical processes:

- communicate mathematically
- connect mathematical ideas to everyday experiences and to other subject areas
- use estimation and mental mathematics where appropriate
- apply new mathematical knowledge to problem solving
- reason and justify their thinking
- use appropriate technologies
- use visualization to assist in problem solving, processing information and making connections.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 7 Mathematics Program of Studies.

Number

- demonstrate a number sense for decimals and integers, including whole numbers
- apply arithmetic operations on decimals and integers, and illustrate their use in solving problems
- illustrate the use of rates, ratios, percentages and decimals in solving problems

Patterns and Relations

- express patterns, including those used in business and industry, in terms of variables, and use expressions containing variables to make predictions
- use variables and equations to express, summarize and apply relationships as problem-solving tools in a restricted range of contexts

Shape and Space

- solve problems involving the properties of circles and their connections with angles and time zones
- link angle measures to the properties of parallel lines
- create and analyze patterns and designs, using congruence, symmetry, translation, rotation and reflection

Statistics and Probability

- develop and implement a plan for the collection, display and analysis of data, using measures of variability and central tendency
- create and solve problems, using probability

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Science

View the science subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/science/

The secondary science program is guided by the vision that all students have the opportunity to develop scientific literacy. The goal of scientific literacy is to develop the science-related knowledge, skills and attitudes that students need to solve problems and make decisions, and at the same time help them become lifelong learners—maintaining their sense of wonder about the world around them.

The program is designed to help students understand the nature and role of science, as well as develop a solid grounding in science knowledge, skills and attitudes. Throughout the program, students learn that:

- science provides an ordered way of studying the natural world
- scientific discovery often leads to the development of new technologies and new technologies can lead to new fields of scientific investigation
- science takes place in a social context and responds to human needs. Science and technology have both intended and unintended consequences for humans and the environment.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how issues of stewardship, morals, ethics and Catholic teaching can be integrated appropriately into the science curriculum.

Students study five units during their Grade 7 year. The **topics** studied and the **major outcomes** for each are:

Interactions and Ecosystems

- describe relationships between humans and their environments
- trace the flow of energy and materials within an ecosystem
- monitor a local environment, and assess the impacts of environmental factors on it
- describe relationships in maintaining life-supporting environments

Plants for Food and Fibre

- investigate plant uses
- investigate life processes and structures of plants
- analyze plant environments
- identify and interpret the culture and use of plants as sources of food and fibre

Heat and Temperature

- illustrate how human needs have led to technologies for obtaining and controlling thermal energy
- describe the nature of thermal energy and its effects on different forms of matter
- apply an understanding of heat and temperature in interpreting natural events and technological devices
- analyze issues related to the selection and use of thermal technologies

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Structures and Forces

- describe and interpret different types of structures and identify materials from which they are made
- investigate forces within structures
- investigate the properties of materials used in structures
- describe processes used in building structures to meet human needs with a margin of safety

Planet Earth

- describe methods used in the scientific study of Earth and its component materials
- identify evidence for the rock cycle and explain the characteristics of particular rocks
- investigate and interpret evidence of major changes in landforms and rock layers
- describe, interpret and evaluate evidence from the fossil record

The program develops **skills** in four major areas:

Initiating and Planning
Students devise (or make) plans to investigate:

- science-inquiry questions
- practical problems
- science-related issues.

Performing and Recording
Students conduct investigations through:

- observation
- recording data
- researching information.

Analyzing and Interpreting
Students develop, analyze and assess possible explanations through:

- data display
- inference
- evaluation.

Communication and Teamwork
Students work collaboratively to:

- communicate questions, ideas, procedures and results
- evaluate individual and group processes
- defend a position or conclusion, based on their findings.

To support their learning, students are encouraged to develop positive **attitudes** in the following six areas.

- Continuing Interest in Science
- Respect for the Ideas of People with Various Backgrounds and Views
- Support for Scientific Processes
- Collaboration with Others
- Stewardship for the Natural Environment
- Safety in Science

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Social Studies

View the social studies subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/social/

The aim of the social studies program is to help students gain basic knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become responsible citizens and contributing members of society. Social studies includes the study of history, geography, economics, the behavioural sciences and humanities.

Grade 7 social studies focuses on people and their culture. The content is organized around three topics and in each topic, students are expected to address at least one issue and one question for inquiry.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how issues of social justice, the contribution of the Church to community (locally and globally), and Church teaching can be integrated appropriately into the social studies curriculum.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 7 Social Studies Program of Studies.

Culture

- understand that communication in all its forms is the means by which culture is learned
- understand that socialization is achieved through interaction with others
- understand that beliefs and values influence behaviour
- understand that individuals assume a variety of roles
- differentiate between main and related ideas
- draw conclusions about basic aspects of culture

Cultural Transition: A Case Study of Japan

- understand that change is a continuous process occurring unevenly within cultures
- understand that some aspects of culture are more enduring than others
- identify points of view expressed in cartoons, pictures, photographs
- read and interpret maps to identify relationships between geography and Japanese culture
- draw conclusions about cultural transition in Japan

Canada: A Bilingual and Multicultural Country

- understand that Canada's population is made up of a variety of cultural groups
- understand that bilingualism recognizes the existence of two official languages
- understand that multiculturalism supports the existence of cultural diversity
- read and interpret maps to illustrate the various nations from which many Canadians or their forbears emigrated
- understand bilingualism and multiculturalism in Canada well enough to discuss the general concepts and relationships
- identify and evaluate alternative answers, conclusions, solutions or decisions regarding questions and issues used for inquiry and research on bilingualism and multiculturalism in Canada
- develop respect and tolerance for the rights, needs, opinions and concerns of others, and for the bilingual and multicultural nature of Canada

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

View the information and communication technology subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/ict/

The ICT curriculum is not intended to stand alone as a course, but rather to be infused within English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Schools have until June 2003 to phase in the program. The outcomes are organized by divisions; Division 3 is Grade 7 to Grade 9.

Students learn about the nature of technology, how to use and apply a variety of technologies, and the importance of technology to self and society.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 7 to Grade 9 Information and Communication Technology Program of Studies.

Communicating, Inquiring, Decision Making and Problem Solving

- evaluate the authority and reliability of electronic sources
- develop a process to manage volumes of information that can be made available through electronic sources
- articulate clearly a plan of action to use technology to solve a problem

Foundational Operations, Knowledge and Concepts

- explain how the need for global communication affects technology around the world
- explain the issues involved in balancing the right to access information with the right to personal privacy
- describe the impact of communication technologies on past, present and future workplaces, lifestyles and the environment
- recognize that the ability of technology to manipulate images and sound can alter the meaning of a communication

Processes for Productivity

- create multimedia presentations that take into account audiences of diverse size, age, gender, ethnicity and geographic location
- use advanced word processing menu features to accomplish a task; for example, insert a table, graph and text from another document
- design, create and modify a database for a specific purpose

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Physical Education

View the physical education subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/physed/

The aim of the K–12 physical education program is to enable students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle. Students participate in a variety of physical activities: dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in alternative environments, such as aquatics and outdoor pursuits. All learning outcomes are to be met through these activities.

Within Catholic schools, some of the values integrated into the Physical Education program include recognizing the dignity of each person as evident in their unique gifts and talents, community building, cooperation and shared responsibility, respect and care for the body.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 7 Physical Education Program of Studies.

Activity

Basic Skills

- demonstrate locomotor, nonlocomotor and manipulative skills, by using elements of body and space awareness, effort and relationships, to improve personal performance

Application of Basic Skills

- demonstrate activity-specific basic skills in a variety of games
- demonstrate more challenging strategies and tactics that coordinate effort with others; e.g., team/fair play, in order to achieve a common goal activity

Benefits Health

Functional Fitness

- explain the components of fitness; e.g., strength, endurance, flexibility, cardio-respiratory activity; analyze individual abilities and formulate an individual plan for growth

Body Image

- discuss performance-enhancing substances as a part of the negative effect on physical activity

Well-being

- identify and explain the effects of exercise on the body systems before, during and after exercise

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Cooperation

Communication
- identify positive active living role models

Fair Play
- demonstrate etiquette and fair play

Leadership
- identify and then take responsibility for various roles while participating in physical activity; and, identify the leadership and followership skills used while participating in physical education

Teamwork
- identify and demonstrate positive behaviours that show respect for self and others

Do It Daily ... for Life!

Effort
- identify and demonstrate strategies that encourage participation and continued motivation

Safety
- recommend safe movement experiences that promote an active, healthy lifestyle; e.g., protective equipment for in-line skating, ball hockey

Goal Setting/Personal Challenge
- evaluate different ways to achieve an activity goal, and determine a personal approach that is challenging

Active Living in the Community
- identify local community programs that promote physically active lifestyles

Exemptions from Physical Education

Exemptions from participation in physical education may be given for medical conditions, when accompanied by a medical certification from a doctor to the principal; for religious beliefs, when accompanied by a statement in writing from the parent to the principal; and where access to facilities is prohibitive. When exemption is granted, activities consistent with the program outcomes should be substituted where appropriate.

Physical Education Online

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/physicaleducationonline

The Physical Education Online Web site provides a wealth of information to support student learning of the K–12 physical education program of studies. The site is organized into three major sections:
- Program of Studies
- Teacher Resources
- Home Education

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*					
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.					

Health and Life Skills

View the health and life skills subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/healthpls/

The aim of the health and life skills program is to enable students to make well-informed, healthy choices and to develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of self and others. A comprehensive health program involves a partnership among home, school and community.

In a Catholic school, learning outcomes are addressed within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. The local boards of many Catholic school jurisdictions have approved supplementary resources and adapted the curriculum to better meet the needs of their students, their families and their faith communities.

The following learning outcomes from the Health and Life Skills Program of Studies are taught from a Catholic viewpoint and perspective.

Wellness Choices

Personal Health/Safety and Responsibility

- make responsible and informed choices to maintain health and to promote safety for self and others. God gives us the gifts of life and health; we are called to care for and respect these precious gifts

Relationship Choices

Understanding and Expressing Feelings/Interactions/Group Roles and Processes

- develop effective interpersonal skills that demonstrate responsibility, respect and caring in order to establish and maintain healthy interactions. The glory of God is in fully alive people who revere the dignity that all persons share by virtue of being created in God's image and likeness

Life Learning Choices

Learning Strategies/Life Roles and Career Development/ Volunteerism

- use resources effectively to manage and explore life roles and career opportunities and challenges. Our Christian vocation is to use our gifts, talents and the resources available to us in building God's reign of peace and love by serving others

Human Sexuality Education

Human sexuality education emphasizes the individual nature of change and growth, and the importance of one's family and personal values with respect to sexuality and sexual decision making. Learning outcomes are addressed within the context of Catholic teaching.

Schools are required to offer human sexuality education in Grade 4 to Grade 9. Parents have the right to exempt their child from this instruction. Schools will provide alternative learning experiences for those students who have been exempted from human sexuality instruction.

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Optional Courses

In addition to required subject areas, junior high schools must offer a minimum of two provincially authorized optional courses. Optional courses are designed to reinforce learnings in core courses and to provide opportunities for students to explore areas of interest and career possibilities.

The range of optional courses offered varies from school to school depending on such factors as student and parent preferences, facilities and staffing.

Optional Courses. ***Students may select from:***					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Career and Technology Studies (CTS)

View the career and technology studies subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/cts/

View the Multimedia CTS Project on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://www.learnalberta.ca/CTSEnglish_French/CTSIndex.asp

Career and Technology Studies (CTS) is an optional program designed for Alberta's secondary school students. CTS helps junior high and senior high school students to:

- develop skills they can apply in daily living now and in the future
- investigate career options and make effective career choices
- use technology (processes, tools and techniques) effectively and efficiently
- apply and reinforce learnings developed in other subject areas
- prepare for entry into the workplace or further learning.

The CTS curriculum is organized into 22 strands. Each strand represents a group of courses designed to support broad career and occupational opportunities. Courses are the building blocks for each strand, and they define what a student is expected to know and be able to do.

New courses for the 2003–2004 school year include:

- Fabrication Studies—Semi-automated/Automated Welding; Flux Core Arc Welding 1; Flux Core Arc Welding 2
- Financial Management—Personal Investment Planning 1; Personal Investment Planning 2

The 22 Career and Technology Studies program strands are:

Agriculture
Career Transitions
Communication Technology
Community Health
Construction Technologies
Cosmetology Studies
Design Studies
Electro-Technologies
Energy and Mines
Enterprise and Innovation
Fabrication Studies
Fashion Studies
Financial Management
Foods
Forestry
Information Processing
Legal Studies
Logistics
Management and Marketing
Mechanics
Tourism Studies
Wildlife

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Optional Courses. *Students may select from:*					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Fine and Performing Arts

View the fine arts subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/finearts/

Through the Fine and Performing Arts courses of Art, Drama and Music, students develop self-awareness and express their creativity in many ways. They will respond personally and critically to a variety of art, drama and music styles and forms.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how the knowledge, skills and values studied within the fine arts curriculum can be used to understand the religious dimensions of art, liturgy, music and history. They are also used directly to enhance the religious and spiritual culture of the school, and to celebrate the various liturgical feasts of the year.

Art

Students learn how to use traditional and contemporary tools, materials and media to express their feelings, think like artists, value the art creation and value the art form. Three areas form the framework of the junior high school art program:

- Drawings—recording, investigating, communicating, evaluating and articulating aspects of making images
- Compositions—organizations, components and relationships involved in the creation of images
- Encounters—looking at images and artifacts, finding ideas for making art, learning about the art of other times, changing imagery, and learning to understand and appreciate the purposes and effects of art

Drama

Drama encourages students to explore a variety of dramatic roles and develop a range of dramatic skills. In the junior high school drama program, students learn about drama and theatre through:

- Movement—physical, nonverbal expression
- Speech—exploration of talking and speaking to communicate ideas effectively
- Improvisation/Acting—acting out an idea or situation
- Theatre Studies—an introduction to the elements of drama and theatre
- Technical Theatre—stage construction and the use of sound, lighting, makeup, costumes, sets and props.

Music

Instrumental music, choral music and general music are the three distinctive, yet related, programs in the junior high school music curriculum. Development in any of these programs requires student involvement as a performer, listener and composer. Five main goals of the junior high school music program are to:

- develop skills in listening to, performing and reading music
- strive for musical excellence
- understand, evaluate and appreciate a variety of music styles
- develop self-expression, creativity and communication through music
- increase awareness of the history of music and the role of music in own lives.

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Optional Courses. *Students may select from:*					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Languages Other than English

A variety of courses and programs in languages other than English are available throughout Alberta. Some of these include Aboriginal languages, French, German and Ukrainian.

Students registered in an **immersion** or a **bilingual program** follow a language arts course in the target language (e.g., French, Ukrainian) in addition to studying English language arts. In these programs, the target language is also used as the language of instruction in other subject areas, such as mathematics, science and social studies.

Aboriginal Languages

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/aborigin

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn Aboriginal languages and to increase awareness of Aboriginal cultures.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study.

- learn basic communication skills in Blackfoot or Cree
- develop cultural sensitivity, and enhance personal development
- develop a desire to extend or improve proficiency in the Blackfoot or Cree language

French Immersion Program

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/quicklinks/seclang.asp

In Alberta, many students have the opportunity to study in a French immersion program. This program, designed for non-French speaking students, offers an effective way for students to become functionally fluent in French while achieving all of the learning outcomes of the regular programs of study. Graduates from French immersion programs achieve a level of fluency in the target language that allows them to pursue their post-secondary studies in French or to accept employment in a workplace where French is the main language of communication.

There are many delivery models for French immersion present in Alberta schools:

- Early immersion—students begin their immersion experience in Kindergarten and continue in the program to Grade 12.
- Late immersion—the entry point is typically Grade 7.

Courses offered in the French language have as their basis a French version of the English program of studies, which is identical or comparable to the one used in the English program. The exception is Grade 1 to Grade 3 Social Studies. However, a program of studies specific to French immersion students was developed for the learning/teaching of French language arts. Some of the main French language arts learning outcomes are presented in the following section, French Language Arts.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/YYCHWE/Home.htm

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *Yes, You Can Help! Information and Inspiration for French Immersion Parents.* It is available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

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French Language Arts

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/FLA/default.asp

The junior high school French language arts program continues the learning started at the elementary level.

Students learn to apply the basic rules of oral and written language, and are better able to understand, clarify and express abstract thought. By working individually, in groups or in activities organized by the Francophone community, students monitor and enhance their communication skills. Students become more aware of factors that influence the way they communicate effectively in various contexts.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the French Language Arts Program of Studies.

Oral Comprehension

- participate in group work situations
- listen to a variety of texts, such as newspaper and magazine articles, short stories, songs, and chapters from novels
- view audiovisual materials
- make predictions based on new indicators and pay special attention to text structure

Reading Comprehension

- read and analyze a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts
- read texts in different ways according to purpose for reading
- apply knowledge to next text structures

Oral Production

- demonstrate what is already known and what has been learned about a given subject
- express opinions based on examples from readings, interactions with others and so on
- explore topic-related vocabulary in various contexts
- use words or expressions that support and encourage partners

Writing

- write texts, establishing links between the feelings of characters and their actions
- select a text structure consistent with communicative intent
- organize ideas according to a plan—introduction, development and conclusion
- demonstrate agreement of subject and verb in the present conditional, simple future and imperative
- use appropriate punctuation and spelling

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French as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/fsl

In Alberta, French as a Second Language (FSL) is a program in which the French language is taught as a subject, often between 20 and 40 minutes a day, to help students develop communication skills, language knowledge and cultural awareness in French.

Depending upon a school board's language policy, French as a second language in junior high schools may be offered as an optional program or it may be a compulsory program. School boards may begin the program at different grade levels, since the program is based on developing language proficiency over a grade or grades without being grade specific. Many schools start the program in Grade 4, but others may not begin until Grade 7 or later.

The program is designed to teach students to:

- understand what they hear and read in French
- communicate their ideas orally and in written form, using an approach that is based on concrete and real-life experiences and situations
- acquire knowledge about local, provincial and national Francophone groups to become more aware of their presence and to understand them better
- develop French language vocabulary and grammar through thematic activities and projects that are related to real-life language experiences
- acquire specific language learning strategies that will help them become better second language learners.

Students entering junior high school may either begin their French language experience or they can continue developing their language proficiency, depending upon the level that was attained in elementary school. It could take students one or more school years to reach a particular language proficiency level, depending upon when the students start the program and how much time is given to French instruction in the school.

The program is organized into three language proficiency levels—Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced. Students in junior high school generally focus on Beginning and Intermediate levels. Each level has its own set of experiences. As students work through these experiences, they develop their ability to understand and communicate in French.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/FSL/whatsnew/FSL_handbook/ab_public.htm

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *French as a Second Language (FSL) Program: A Guide for Parents*. It is available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

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German Language and Culture

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This new three-year course sequence is designed to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency in German and a global perspective.

The following outcomes cover four areas of languages and culture development:

Applications
Students will use German in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes.

- to receive and impart information
- to express emotions and personal perspectives
- to get things done
- to form, maintain and change interpersonal relationships
- to extend their knowledge of the world
- for imaginative purposes and personal enjoyment

Language Competence
Students will understand and produce German effectively and competently in spoken and written forms.

- interpret and produce oral texts
- interpret and produce written texts, graphics and images
- attend to form
- apply knowledge of how discourse is organized, structured and sequenced in German
- apply knowledge of the sociocultural context

Global Citizenship
Students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective global citizens, through the exploration of the cultures of the German-speaking world.

- historical and contemporary elements of the cultures of German-speaking peoples
- affirming and valuing diversity
- personal and career opportunities

Strategies
Students will know and use various strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication.

- language learning
- language use
- general learning

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Spanish Language and Culture

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This new three-year course sequence is designed to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency in Spanish and a global perspective.

The following outcomes cover four areas of languages and culture development:

Applications
Students will use Spanish in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes.

- to receive and impart information
- to express emotions and personal perspectives
- to get things done
- to form, maintain and change interpersonal relationships
- to extend their knowledge of the world
- for imaginative purposes and personal enjoyment

Language Competence
Students will use Spanish effectively and competently.

- attend to form
- interpret and produce texts
- apply knowledge of the sociocultural context
- apply knowledge of how text is organized, structured and sequenced in Spanish

Global Citizenship
Students will acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective global citizens, through the exploration of the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world.

- historical and contemporary elements of Spanish-speaking cultures
- affirming diversity
- personal and career opportunities

Strategies
Students will know and use strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication.

- language learning
- language use
- general learning

Ukrainian Language Arts

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This course is designed as the Ukrainian language learning component for students in the Ukrainian bilingual program.

Students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing. They learn to use Ukrainian confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and further learning. They are able to explore, understand and appreciate the Ukrainian culture for personal growth and satisfaction, and to participate in and contribute to an interdependent and multicultural global society.

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Ukrainian as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/uk2l.pdf

This program is designed for students who wish to learn to communicate with others in Ukrainian and to preserve Ukrainian language and culture. The program begins in Grade 7 and continues through to Grade 12.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Ukrainian as a Second Language Program of Studies.

- use appropriate social conventions
- ask information about another person, and relay that information
- carry out commands
- express actions in the negative
- ask and tell where people and objects are located, where one lives, simple directions
- ask and tell what one wants to do or needs to do
- count from 1 to 100; and recognize, orally, the ordinal numbers 1 to 10
- ask and tell the parts of the day, days of the week, seasons of the year

In a Catholic school, both within the Religious Education Program and along with the study of the Ukrainian language, many aspects of the life and faith of the Ukrainian Catholic Church are studied and celebrated.

Other Languages

Many school boards have developed their own programs. Locally developed language programs include: Arabic, Chinese, Chipewyan, German, Hebrew, Italian and Polish. These locally developed courses are based on local needs and demands, and may not always be available.

For more information on second language instruction offered in your area, please contact your local school board.

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Optional Courses. *Students may select from:*					
Career and Technology Studies (CTS)	Fine and Performing Arts	Languages Other Than English	Environmental and Outdoor Education	Ethics	Locally Developed Courses

Environmental and Outdoor Education

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/others/eoed.pdf

In environmental and outdoor education, students develop interest and competence in outdoor studies and develop an understanding of their relationship to the environment. Environmental and outdoor education can be offered as a single course or as a sequence of courses, and includes:

- the basic knowledge, skills and attitudes required for safe and comfortable experiences
- awareness and appreciation of living things
- understanding of basic ecological processes
- skill, judgement, confidence and sensitivity in a range of environmentally responsible activities in outdoor settings
- lifestyle strategies that encourage responsibility for local and global environments.

Ethics

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/others/jhethics.pdf

The ethics course is designed to help students become contributing, ethical and mature persons, and may be offered in Grade 7, Grade 8 or Grade 9. The aim of the course is to help students become more thoughtful, to think of the interests of others, and to see ethical implications in their daily lives. The ethics course includes:

- working definitions of ethics and values
- decision-making skills
- historical values and traditions
- values of different cultural groups
- responsibility to community.

Locally Developed Courses

School boards may develop and/or acquire courses that are innovative and responsive to local and individual needs. Contact your local school board to get information about locally developed courses available in your jurisdiction.

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Personal and Career Development

Preparing for life and work is a complex process that begins in the early years of schooling and continues throughout our lives. Alberta schools are taking an active role—along with parents and the community—in helping students move successfully from basic education to further studies and the workplace.

In junior high school, students begin linking their personal aptitudes and goals to possible future careers. They continue to develop life skills, including such employability skills as cooperating with others and being reliable. At this stage, students begin to outline their own learning and career goals.

Personal and career development activities and outcomes are integrated into all junior high school courses and programs. The following junior high school programs focus specifically on these topics: Health and Life Skills, Physical Education, Career and Technology Studies (CTS) and work study.

Many junior high schools organize special career development activities, such as mentoring, job shadowing, portfolios and annual career fairs. Junior high schools encourage students to develop a career plan. Plans should be updated annually and signed by parents and principals. Students typically develop a personal portfolio, including a résumé, and may use a career planner such as the *Middle/Junior High School Student Learning–Career Planner* developed by Alberta Learning.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/cardir_jr.pdf
[pdf version]

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/JHPlan.doc
[word version]

The *Student Learning–Career Planner Information Booklet* and the *Middle/Junior High School Student Learning–Career Planner* are useful tools for Alberta's secondary school teachers and guidance counsellors as they work with students, parents and other key partners to help students move through the career planning process. The information booklet and junior high school planner are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/cardir.pdf

Planning for Senior High School

During their junior high years, students make decisions about their senior high school program. It helps to keep in mind that:

- strengths, interests and realistic career paths play a major role in decision making
- specific courses are required for an Alberta High School Diploma or Certificate of Achievement
- knowledge of course sequences is important, because many courses require prerequisites.

Guidance from the school and classroom teacher is available. Planning for senior high school is more effective when students and parents are familiar with requirements and work closely with teachers.

Alberta Learning provides information on planning for senior high school through a variety of resources, including the following:

- *Senior High School Mathematics Programs: Revised Handbook for Parents and Students*
- *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents: Senior High School*
- *A Credit to Yourself: Planning Your Senior High School Diploma Program*, May 2003

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/math/whatsnew/intro.asp
http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/parents/handbooks/
View *A Credit to Yourself: Planning Your Senior High School Diploma Program*, May 2003 at
http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/other.asp

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